

THE IMPACT OF CAREGIVING ON THE CAREGIVER

Are you the primary caregiver for an elderly family member or friend? Are you feeling overwhelmed and stressed? If so, you are not alone!

THE FACTS

- Approximately 21 million full- and part-time employees are balancing work and caring for an elderly relative.ⁱ
- They spend an average of 18 to 40 hours per month providing Caregiving duties.ⁱⁱ
- The number of Americans age 65 and above will increase from 35 million in 2000 to over 80 million in the next 50 years.ⁱⁱⁱ
- The majority of caregivers say they would like to obtain information about options, providers, and support services, but don't know where to look.^{iv}

THE IMPACT ON YOU

The caregiver is generally responsible for maintain two households, including: shopping, cleaning, laundry, yard and house upkeep. Additionally, they must arrange and transport their elderly loved one to multiple doctor appointments, ordering and managing medications, paying bills and balancing accounts. It is mentally, emotionally and physically demanding on them.

Caregivers not only spend time at the doctor for their loved ones, they themselves experience health issues at a greater rate than none caregiver employees. Another shocking statistic is that one-third of all caregivers describe their own health as fair to poor.^v

THE IMPACT ON YOUR WORK

In 2004, the productivity loss on U.S. businesses was estimated at \$33.6 billion loss related to informal caregiving.^{vi}

This loss is due to:

- Absenteeism
- Reduced productivity
- Work place distractions due to personal phone calls

- Increased health care costs
- Project delays and missed appointments, deadlines and meetings
- Resentment from co-workers for picking up the load
- Turnover

WHEN IT'S TIME FOR A MOVE

Although the stress does not end for a primary caregiver once the loved one begins the search for senior housing or care, it is a step toward a reduction in your daily stress. Many families have failed to plan for this contingency which can cause more stress on everyone. In addition, moving at any age is difficult; there is the added stress of a lack of independence, lack of desire to move, misunderstanding of the options.

Make sure to reach out to professionals who can help with the process. Seek advice on how to speak with your parents about the possibility of moving or seeking help in the home. Read our article on “Convincing a Parent it is Time to Move.”

There are hundreds of options and multiple types of senior housing. Often people think the only option is a nursing facility but that is far from the truth. There are issues to consider regarding cost, services, distance, Medicare, Medicaid and downsizing. This can be an overwhelming process for the Caregiver who often takes more time off work, calls during working hours and adds hours of stress to their day.

ⁱ National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP, *Caregiving in the United States*, 2004.

ⁱⁱ National Working Caregivers Resource Center website quoting *Families USA Foundation*, 1997.

ⁱⁱⁱ U. S. Bureau of the Census Data, Statistical Brief, Sixty-Five Plus in the United States.

^{iv} National Institute of Business Management, 2000

^v Institute for Health and Aging quoted on Caregiverslibrary.com.

^{vi} National Alliance for Caregiving (NAC) and AARP, *Caregiving in the United States*, 2004.